Mary Boswell
1742

Comus, a Mask:

(*Now adapted to the* STAGE)

As Alter'd from

Milton's Mask, &c.

(Price One Shilling.)

1346 f. 10.
1—5

643. d. 16
1—5

Comus, a Mask:

(Now adopted to the STAGE)

As ACTED from

Milton's Mask, &c.

(Price One Shilling.)

13. H. 7.

Comus, a Mask:

(*Now adapted to the* STAGE)

As Alter'd from

MILTON's Mask

AT

LUDLOW-CASTLE,

Which was never repreſented

But on *Michaelmas-Day*, 1634;

BEFORE THE

Right Honble. the Earl of *Bridgewater*,
Lord Preſident of *WALES*.

The principal Performers were

The Lord *Brackly*, Mr. *Tho. Egerton*, } The Lady *Alice Egerton*.

The Muſick was compoſed

By Mr. *Henry Lawes*,

Who alſo repreſented the *Attendant Spirit*.

——*Quid vocis modulamen inane juvabit*
Verborum ſenſuſque vacans numerique loquacis?
MILTON. ad Patrem.

LONDON:
Printed by J. HUGHS, near *Lincoln's-Inn-Fields*,
For R. DODSLEY, at *Tully's-Head, Pall-Mall*
MDCCXXXVIII.

(Price One Shilling.)

COMUS, A MASK:

(Now adapted to the STAGE)

As Altered from

MILTON'S Mask

AT

LUDLOW-CASTLE,

Which was never represented

But on Michelmas-Day, 1634;

BEFORE THE

Right Honble. the Earl of Bridgewater,

Lord President of [illegible]

MVSEVM BRITANNICVM

The principal Parts were

The Lord Brackley, Mr. Thomas Egerton,

and the Lady Alice

The Masque was compiled

By Mr. Henry Lawes,

Who alſo repreſented the Attendant Spirit.

Quid vetat moduleum tibias jungere Phœbi?
Verborum Veneri plectra canora meis?
MILTON ad Patrem.

LONDON:

Printed by J. Heptinſtall, near Fetter-Lane, Fleet-ſtreet,

For R. DODSLEY, at Tully's-Head, Pall-Mall.

MDCCXXXVIII.

(Price One Shilling.)

ERRATA.

Page 16 Line 5 read, *There yields the melting Fair.*
Page 22 Line 16 for *E. Brother* read, *First Attendant Spirit.*

BRITISH MUSEUM

Dramatis Perſonæ.

COMUS	Mr. *Quin*.
The LADY	Mrs. *Cibber*.
The BROTHERS	Mr. *Milward*. Mr. *Cibber*.
Firſt SPIRIT	Mr. *Mills*.
Second SPIRIT	Mr. *Hill*.
EUPHROSYNE	Mrs. *Clive*.
SABRINA	Mrs. *Arne*.
Attendant SPIRITS, BACCHANALS, Paſtoral Characters, and other Vocal Parts	Mr. *Beard*, Mrs. *Clive*, Mrs. *Arne*, and others:

Dancers, *&c.*

SCENE a Wood near *Ludlow-Caſtle*.

COMUS,

A

MASK.

The first Scene discovers a wild Wood.

The first Attendant Spirit Enters.

Before the starry Threshold of *Jove's* Court
My Mansion is, where those immortal Shapes
Of bright Aërial Spirits live inspher'd
In Regions mild of calm and serene Air,
Above the Smoak and Stir of this dim Spot
Which Men call Earth, and with low-thoughted Care
Confin'd and pester'd in this Pin-fold here,
Strive to keep up a frail and feverish Being,
Unmindful of the Crown that Virtue gives,
After this mortal Change, to her true Servants
Amongst th' enthroned Gods on sainted Seats.
Yet some there be, that by due Steps aspire
To lay their just Hands on that Golden Key,
That ope's the Palace of Eternity:

To ſuch my Errand is; and but for ſuch,
I would not ſoil theſe pure Ambroſial Weeds
With the rank Vapours of this Sin-worn Mould.
But whence yon ſlanting Stream of purer Light,
Which ſtreaks the Midnight Gloom, and hither darts
It's beamy Point? Some Meſſenger from *Jove*,
Commiſſion'd to direct or ſhare my Charge,
And if I ken him right, a Spirit pure
As treads the ſpangled Pavement of the Sky,
The gentle *Philadel*: But ſwift as Thought
He comes.——

The ſecond Attendant Spirit deſcends.

Declare, on what ſtrange Errand bent,
Thou viſiteſt this Clime, to me aſſign'd,
So far remote from thy appointed Sphere?

2d *Spir.* On no appointed Task thou ſee'ſt me now:
But as returning from *Elyſian* Bowers
(Whither from mortal Coil a Soul I wafted)
Along this boundleſs Sea of waving Air
I ſteer'd my Flight, betwixt the gloomy Shade
Of theſe thick Boughs thy radiant Form I ſpy'd
Gliding, as ſtreams the Moon thro' dusky Clouds;
Inſtant I ſtoop'd my Wing, and downward ſped
To learn thy Errand, and with thine to join
My Kindred Aid, from Mortals ne'er with-held,
When Virtue on the Brink of Peril ſtands.

1ſt *Spir.* Then mark th' Occaſion that demands it here.
Neptune, I need not tell, beſides the Sway
Of ev'ry ſalt Flood and each ebbing Stream,
Took in by Lot 'twixt high and nether *Jove*
Imperial Rule of all the Sea-girt Iſles,
That, like to rich and various Gems, inlay
The unadorned Boſom of the Deep,
Which he, to grace his Tributary Gods,
By courſe commits to ſeveral Governments,

And

And gives them leave to wear their Saphire Crowns,
And wield their little Tridents; but this Isle,
The greatest and the best of all the Main,
He quarters to his blue-hair'd Deities;
And all this Tract that fronts the falling Sun
A noble Peer of mickle Trust and Power
Has in his Charge, with temper'd Awe to guide
An old and haughty Nation, proud in Arms.

2d *Spir.* Does any Danger threat his legal Sway
From bold Sedition, or close-ambush'd Treason?

1st *Spir.* No Danger thence. But to his lofty Seat,
Which borders on the Verge of this wild Vale,
His blooming Offspring, nurs'd in Princely Lore,
Are coming to attend their Father's State,
And new entrusted Sceptre, and their Way
Lies through the perplex'd Paths of this drear Wood,
The nodding Horror of whose shady Brows
Threats the forlorn and wand'ring Passenger;
And here their tender Age might suffer Peril,
But that by quick Command from sov'reign *Jove*
I was dispatch'd for their Defence and Guard.

2d *Spir.* What Peril can their Innocence assail
Within these lonely and unpeopled Shades?

1st *Spir.* Attend my Words. No Place but harbours Danger:
In ev'ry Region Virtue finds a Foe.
Bacchus, that first from out the purple Grape
Crush'd the sweet Poison of mis-used Wine,
After the *Tuscan* Mariners transform'd,
Coasting the *Tyrrhene* Shore, as the Winds lifted,
On *Circe*'s Island fell; (who knows not *Circe*,
The Daughter of the Sun; whose charmed Cup
Whoever tasted, lost his upright Shape,
And downward fell into a groveling Swine?
This Nymph, that gaz'd upon his clust'ring Locks,
With Ivy-Berries wreath'd, and his blithe Youth,
Had by him, e're he parted thence, a Son

Much like his Father, but his Mother more,
Whom therefore ſhe brought up, and *Comus* nam'd.
2d *Spir.* *Ill-omen'd* Birth to Virtue and her Sons!
1ſt *Spir.* He ripe and frolick of his full-grown Age,
Roving the *Celtick* and *Iberian* Fields,
At laſt betakes him to this ominous Wood,
And in thick Shelter of black Shades imbower'd,
Excells his Mother at her mighty Art,
Off'ring to every weary Traveller
His orient Liquor in a Chryſtal Glaſs,
To quench the Drougth of *Phœbus*, which as they taſte
(For moſt do taſte through fond intemp'rate Thirſt)
Soon as the Potion works, their Human Countenance,
Th'expreſs Reſemblance of the *Gods*, is chang'd
Into ſome Brutiſh Form of Wolf, or Bear,
Or Ounce, or Tiger, Hog, or bearded Goat,
All other Parts remaining as they were.
Yet, when he walks his tempting Rounds, the Sorcerer
By Magick Power their Human Face reſtores,
And outward Beauty, to delude the Sight.
2d *Spir.* Loſe they the Memory of their former State?
1ſt *Spir.* No, they (ſo perfect is their Miſery)
Not once perceive their foul Disfigurement,
But boaſt themſelves more comely than before,
And all their Friends and Native Home forget,
To roll with Pleaſure in a Senſual Sty.
2d *Spir.* Degrading Fall! From ſuch a dire Diſtreſs,
What Pain too great our mortal Charge to ſave!
1ſt *Spir.* For this, when any favour'd of High *Jove*
Chances to paſs through this advent'rous Glade,
Swift

Swift as the Sparkle of a glancing Star
I ſhoot from Heaven, to give him ſafe Convoy,
As now I do: and opportune thou com'ſt
To ſhare an Office, which thy Nature loves.
This be our Task: but firſt I muſt put off
Theſe my Sky-Robes ſpun out of *Iris'* Wooff,
And take the Weeds and Likeneſs of a Swain
That to the Service of this Houſe belongs,
Who with his ſoft Pipe and Smooth-ditty'd Song,
Well knows to ſtill the wild Winds when they roar,
And huſh the waving Woods; nor of leſs Faith,
And in this Office of his Mountain Watch
Likelieſt, and neareſt to the preſent Aid
Of this Occaſion.-Veil'd in ſuch Diſguiſe,
Be it my Care the ſever'd Youths to guide
To their diſtreſs'd and lonely Siſter; thine
To chear her Foot-ſteps through the Magick Wood.
Whatever Bleſſed Spirit hovers near,
On Errands bent to wand'ring Mortals Good,
If Need require, him ſummon to thy Side.
Unſeen, of Mortal Eye, ſuch Thoughts inſpire,
Such Heaven-born Confidence, as Need demands
In Hour of Trial.

2d *Spir.* Swift as winged Winds
To my glad Charge I fly. [*Exit.*

Manet 1ſt *Spirit.*

——————————I'll wait a while
To watch the Sorcerer; for I hear the Tread
Of hateful Steps; I muſt be viewleſs now.

Comus *Enters with a Charming-Rod in one Hand, his Glaſs in the other, with him a Rout of Riotous Men and Women, dreſs'd as Bacchanals; they come in making a riotous and unruly Noiſe, with Torches in their Hands*

Comus

Comus Speaks.

Com. The Star that bids the Shepherd fold
Now the Top of Heav'n doth hold,
And the gilded Car of Day
His glowing Axle doth allay
In the ſteep *Atlantick* Stream,
And the ſlope Sun his upward Beam
Shoots againſt the dusky Pole,
Pacing toward the other Goal
Of his Chamber in the Eaſt,
Mean while welcome Joy and Feaſt.

SONG, *By a Man.*

I.

NOW Phœbus *ſinketh in the Weſt,*
Welcome Song, and welcome Jeſt,
Midnight Shout, and Revelry,
Tipſy Dance and Jollity:
Braid your Locks with roſy Twine,
Dropping Odours, dropping Wine.

II.

Rigour now is gone to Bed,
And Advice with ſcrup'lous Head,
Strict Age, and ſowre Severity
With their grave Saws in ſlumber lye.

Comus

Comus Speaks.

We that are of purer Fire
Imitate the ſtarry Choir,
Who in their Nightly watchful Spheres
Lead in ſwift round the Months and Years.
The Sounds and Seas, and all their finny Drove,
Now to the Moon in wavering Morrice move,
And on the tawny Sands and Shelves
Trip the pert Fairies and the dapper Elves.

SONG, *By a Woman.*

I.

By dimpled Brook, and Fountain Brim,
The Wood-Nymphs deck'd with Daiſies trim
Their merry Wakes and Paſtimes keep:
What has Night to do with Sleep?

II.

Night has better Sweets to prove;
Venus *now wakes, and wakens* Love:
Come, let us our Rites begin;
'Tis only Day-light that makes Sin.

Comus Speaks.

Hail, Goddeſs of Nocturnal Sport,
Dark-veil'd *Cotytto*, t'whom the ſecret Flame
Of midnight Torches burns; myſterious Dame,
That ne'er art call'd, but when the Dragon-Womb

Of

Of *Stygian* Darkneſs ſpits her thickeſt Gloom,
And makes one Blot of all the Air,
Stay thy cloudy Ebon-Chair,
Wherein thou rid'ſt with *Hecate*, and befriend
Us thy vow'd Prieſts, till utmoſt End
Of all thy Dues be done, and none left out;
E're the blabbing *Eaſtern* ſcout,
The nice Morn, on th' *Indian* ſteep
From her cabin'd Loop-hole peep,
And to the Tell-tale Sun deſcry
Our conceal'd Solemnity.

SONG, *By a Man and Woman.*

I.

FROM Tyrant Laws and Cuſtoms free
We follow ſweet Variety,
By Turns we Drink, and Dance, and Sing,
Love *for ever on the Wing.*

II.

Why ſhould niggard Rules controul
Tranſports of the jovial Soul?
No dull ſtinting Hour we own;
Pleaſure counts our Time alone.

SONG. *By a Man.*

I.

BY the gayly circling Glaſs
We can ſee how Minutes paſs;
By the hollow Cask are told
How the waining Night grows old.

II.

Soon, too ſoon, the buſy Day
Drives us from our Sport and Play.
What have we with Day to do?
Sons of Care! 'twas made for you.

Comus Speaks.

Come, knit Hands, and beat the Ground
In a Light fantaſtick Round.

As they are going to form a Dance, Comus *Speaks.*

Break off, break off, I feel the different Pace
Of ſome Chaſte footing near about this Ground.
Run to your Shrouds, within theſe Brakes and Trees;
Our Number may affright: Some Virgin ſure
(For ſo I can diſtinguiſh by mine Art)
Benighted in theſe Woods. Now to my Charms,
And to my wily Trains. I ſhall e're long
Be well-ſtock'd with as fair a Herd, as graz'd
About my Mother *Circe*. Thus I hurl
My dazling Spells into the ſpungy Air,
Of Pow'r to cheat the Eye with blear Illuſion,

And give it falſe Preſentments, leſt the Place
And my quaint Habits breed Aſtoniſhment,
And put the Damſel to ſuſpicious Flight;
Which muſt not be; for that's againſt my Courſe.
I under fair Pretence of friendly Ends,
And well-plac'd Words of glozing Courteſy,
Baited with Reaſons not unplauſible,
Wind me into the eaſy-hearted Man,
And hug him into Snares. When once her Eye
Hath met the Virtue of this magic Duſt,
I ſhall appear ſome harmleſs Villager,
Whom Thrift keeps up about his Country Gear.
But here ſhe comes; I fairly ſtep aſide
And hearken, if I may her Buſineſs hear.

The Lady Enters.

This Way the Noiſe was, if mine Ear be true,
My beſt Guide now; methought it was the Sound
Of Riot and ill-manag'd Merriment,
Such as the jocund Flute, or gameſome Pipe
Stirs up among the looſe unletter'd Hinds,
When for their teeming Flocks, and Granges full,
In wanton Dance they praiſe the bounteous *Pan*,
And thank the Gods amiſs. I ſhould be loth
To meet the Rudeneſs, and ſwill'd Inſolence
Of ſuch late Waſſailers; yet, O! where elſe
Shall I inform my unacquainted Feet
In the blind Mazes of this tangled Wood?
Com. aſide.] I'll eaſe her of that Care and be her Guide.
Lady. My Brothers, when they ſaw me wearied out
With this long Way, reſolving here to lodge
Under the ſpreading Favour of theſe Pines,
Stepp'd, as they ſaid, to the next Thicket ſide,
To bring me Berries, or ſuch cooling Fruit,
As the kind hoſpitable Woods provide.
They left me then, when the gray-hooded Even,

Like

Like a ſad Votariſt in *Palmer'* Weed,
Roſe from the hindmoſt Wheels of *Phœbus's* Wain.
But where they are, and why they come not back,
Is now the Labour of my Thoughts; 'tis likelieſt
They had engag'd their wand'ring Steps too far.
This is the Place, as well as I may gueſs,
Whence even now the Tumult of loud Mirth
Was riſe, and perfect in my liſt'ning Ear;
Yet nought but ſingle Darkneſs do I find.
What might this be? A thouſand Fantaſies
Begin to throng into my Memory,
Of calling Shapes, and beck'ning Shadows dire,
And Airy Tongues, that ſyllable Mens Names
On Sands, on Shoars, and deſart Wilderneſſes.
Theſe Thoughts may ſtartle well, but not aſtound
The Virtuous Mind, that ever walks attended
By a Strong-ſiding Champion, Conſcience.
O welcome, pure-ey'd Faith, white-handed Hope,
Thou hovering Angel, girt with golden Wings,
And thou unblemiſh'd Form of Chaſtity;
I ſee you viſibly, and now believe
That he, the ſupreme Good, t'whom all Things ill
Are but as ſlaviſh Officers of Vengeance;
Would ſend a gliſt'ring Guardian, if Need were,
To keep my Life and Honour unaſſail'd.
Was I deceiv'd, or did a ſable Cloud
Turn forth her ſilver Lining on the Night?
I did not err, there does a ſable Cloud
Turn forth her ſilver Lining on the Night,
And caſts a Gleam over this tufted Grove.
I cannot hallow to my Brothers, but
Such Noiſe as I can make to be heard fartheſt
I'll venture; for my new-enliven'd Spirits
Prompt me; and they perhaps are not far off.

SONG.

SWEET Eccho, Sweeteſt Nymph, that liv'ſt unſeen
Within thy Airy Cell,
By ſlow Meander's *Margent green,*
And in the Violet-embroider'd Vale,
Where the Love-lorn Nightingale
Nightly to Thee her ſad Song mourneth well;
Canſt thou not tell me of a gentle Pair
That likeſt thy Narciſſus *are?*
O! If thou have
Hid them in ſome flow'ry Cave,
Tell me but where,
Sweet Queen of Parly, Daughter of the Sphere;
So may'ſt thou be tranſlated to the Skies,
And give reſounding Grace to all Heav'n's Harmonies.

Com. Aſide.] Can any mortal Mixture of Earth's Mould
Breathe ſuch Divine Inchanting Raviſhment?
Sure ſomething Holy lodges in that Breaſt,
And with theſe Raptures moves the vocal Air
To teſtify his hidden Reſidence;
How ſweetly did they float upon the Wings
Of Silence, through the empty-vaulted Night,
At every Fall ſmoothing the Raven-down
Of Darkneſs, till it ſmil'd: I have oft heard
My Mother *Circe* with the *Sirens* three
Amidſt the flow'ry-kirtled *Naiades*,
Culling their potent Herbs and baleful Drugs,
Who,

Who, as they ſung, would take the priſon'd Soul,
And lap it in *Elyſium*; *Scylla* wept,
And chid her barking Waves into Attention,
And fell *Charybdis* murmur'd ſoft Applauſe:
Yet they in pleaſing Slumber lull'd the Senſe,
And in ſweet Madneſs robb'd it of itſelf.
But ſuch a ſacred, and home-felt Delight,
Such ſober Certainty of waking Bliſs
I never heard till now.——I'll ſpeak to her,
And ſhe ſhall be my Queen. Hail, foreign Wonder,
Whom certain theſe rough Shades did never breed;
Unleſs the Goddeſs that in Rural Shrine
Dwell'ſt here with *Pan*, or *Silvan*, by bleſs'd Song
Forbidding every bleak unkindly Fog
To touch the proſperous Growth of this tall Wood.

Lady. Nay, gentle Shepherd, ill is loſt that Praiſe,
That is addreſs'd to unattending Ears:
Not any Boaſt of Skill, but extreme Shift
How to regain my ſever'd Company,
Compell'd me to awake the courteous Eccho,
To give me Anſwer from her moſſy Couch.

Com. What Chance, good Lady, hath bereft you thus?

Lady. Dim Darkneſs, and this leafy Labyrinth.

Com. Could that divide you from near-uſhering Guides?

Lady. They left me weary on a graſſy Turf.

Com. By Falſehood, or Diſcourteſy, or Why?

Lady. To ſeek i'th'Valley ſome cool friendly Spring.

Com. And left your fair Side all unguarded, Lady?

Lady. They were but twain, and purpos'd quick Return.

Com. Perhaps foreſtalling Night prevented them?

Lady. How eaſy my Misfortune is to hit!

Com.

Com. Imports their Loſs, beſide the preſent Need?
Lady. No leſs than if I ſhould my Brother loſe.
Com. Were they of manly Prime, or youthful Bloom?
Lady. As ſmooth as *Hebe*'s their unrazor'd Lips.
Com. Two ſuch I ſaw, what Time the labour'd Ox
In his loſe Traces from the Furrow came,
And the tir'd Hedger at his Supper ſat;
I ſaw them under a green mantling Vine,
That crawls along the Side of yon ſmall Hill,
Plucking ripe Cluſters from the tender Shoots;
Their Port was more than Human, as they ſtood:
I took it for a Fairy Viſion
Of ſome gay Creatures of the Element,
That in the Colours of the Rainbow live,
And play i'th'plaited Clouds. I was awe-ſtrook,
And, as I paſs'd, I worſhipp'd; if thoſe you ſeek,
It were a Journey like the Path to Heav'n,
To help you find them.
Lady. Gentle Villager,
What readieſt Way would bring me to that Place?
Com. Due Weſt it riſes from this ſhrubby Point.
Lady. To find out that, good Shepherd, I ſuppoſe
In ſuch a ſcant Allowance of Star-light,
Would over-task the beſt-Land-Pilot's Art,
Without the ſure Gueſs of well-practis'd Feet.
Com. I know each Lane, and every Alley Green,
Dingle, or buſhy Dell of this wild Wood,
And every bosky Bourn from Side to Side,
My daily Walks and ancient Neighbourhood;
And if your ſtray Attendance be yet lodg'd,
Or ſhroud within theſe Limits, I ſhall know
'Ere Morrow wake, or the low-rooſted Lark
From her thatch'd Pallat rouſe: If otherwiſe,
I can conduct you, Lady, to a low
But loyal Cottage, where you may be ſafe
Till further Queſt.

Lady.

Lady. Shepherd, I take thy Word,
And truſt thy honeſt-offer'd Courteſy,
Which oft is ſooner found in lowly Sheds
With ſmoaky Rafters, than in Tap'ſtry Halls
And Courts of Princes, where it firſt was nam'd,
And yet is moſt pretended: In a Place
Leſs warranted than this, or leſs ſecure,
I cannot be, that I ſhould fear to change it:
Eye me, bleſs'd Providence, and ſquare my Trial
To my proportion'd Strength-Shepherd, lead on.
[*Exeunt.*

Enter Comus's *Crew from behind the Trees.*

SONG. *By a Man.*

I.

FLY ſwiftly, ye Minutes, till Comus *receive*
The nameleſs ſoft Tranſports, that Beauty can give;
The Bowl's frolick Joys let him teach her to prove,
And ſhe in return yield the Raptures of Love.

II.

Without Love and Wine Wit and Beauty are vain,
All Grandeur inſipid, and Riches a Pain,
The moſt ſplendid Palace grows dark as the Grave;
Love and Wine give, ye Gods! or take back what you gave.

CHO-

CHORUS.

Away, away, away,
To Comus' *Court repair;*
There Night out-ſhines the Day,
There melts the yielding Fair.
- yields the melting Fair.

End of the Firſt Act.

ACT

ACT II.

Enter the two Brothers.

Eldeſt Brother.

UNMUFFLE, ye faint Stars; and thou, fair Moon,
That wont'ſt to love the Traveller's Benizon,
Stoop thy pale Viſage through an amber Cloud,
And diſinherit *Chaos*, that reigns here
In double Night of Darkneſs, and of Shades:
Or if your Influence be quite damm'd up
With black uſurping Miſts, ſome gentle Taper,
Tho' a Ruſh-Candle, from the Wicker-hole
Of ſome Clay Habitation, viſit us
With thy long levell'd Rule of ſtreaming Light;
And thou ſhall be our Star of *Arcady*,
Or *Tyrian* Cynoſure.

Y. Brother. Or if our Eyes
Be barr'd that Happineſs, might we but hear
The folded Flocks penn'd in their watled Cotts,
Or Sound of Paſtoral Reed with oaten Stops;
Or whiſtle from the Lodge, or Village Cock
Count the Night-watches to his feather'd Dames,
'Twould be ſome Solace yet, ſome little Chearing
In this cloſe Dungeon of innumerous Boughs.
But Oh! that hapleſs Virgin, our loſt Siſter!

Where may ſhe wander now, whither betake her
From the chill Dew, amongſt rude Burs and Thiſtles?
Perhaps ſome cold Bank is her Boulſter now,
Or 'gainſt the rugged Bark of ſome broad Elm
Leans her unpillow'd Head, fraught with ſad Fears.
What if in wild Amazement and Affright,
Or, while we ſpeak, within the direful Graſp
Of ſavage Hunger, or of ſavage Heat?

E. Brother. Peace, Brother; be not over-exquiſite
To caſt the Faſhion of uncertain Evils;
For grant they be ſo, while they reſt unknown,
What need a Man foreſtall his Date of Grief,
And run to meet what he would moſt avoid?
Or if they be but falſe Alarms of Fear,
How bitter is ſuch Self-deluſion?
I do not think my Siſter ſo to ſeek,
Or ſo unprincipled in Virtue's Book,
And the ſweet Peace that Goodneſs boſoms ever,
As that the ſingle Want of Light and Noiſe
(Not being in Danger, as I truſt ſhe is not)
Could ſtir the conſtant Mood of her calm Thoughts,
And put them into miſbecoming Plight.
Virtue could ſee to do what Virtue would
By her own radiant Light, though Sun and Moon
Were in the flat Sea ſunk: and Wiſdom's Self
Oft ſeeks to ſweet retired ſolitude;
Where, with her beſt Nurſe, Contemplation,
She plumes her Feathers, and lets grow her Wings,
That in the various Buſte of Reſort
Were all too ruffled, and ſometimes impair'd.
He that hath Light within his own clear Breaſt,
May ſit i'th'Center, and enjoy bright Day;
But he that hides a dark Soul, and foul Thoughts,
Benighted walks under the mid-day Sun;
Himſelf is his own Dungeon.

Y. Brother. 'Tis moſt true,
That muſing Meditation moſt affects

The

The penſive Secrecy of deſart Cell,
Far from the chearful Haunt of Men and Herds,
And ſits as ſafe as in a Senate-Houſe:
For who would rob a Hermit of his Weeds,
His few Books, or his Beads, or maple Diſh,
Or do his grey-Hairs any Violence?
But Beauty, like the fair *Heſperian* Tree
Laden with blooming Gold, had need the Guard
Of Dragon-Watch with uninchanted Eye,
To ſave her Bloſſoms and defend her Fruit
From the raſh Hand of bold Incontinence.
You may as well ſpread out the unſunn'd Heaps
Of Miſer's Treaſure by an Outlaw's Den,
And tell me it is ſafe, as bid me hope
Danger will wink on Opportunity,
And let a ſingle helpleſs Maiden paſs
Uninjur'd in this wild ſurrounding Waſte.
Of Night or Lonelineſs it recks me not;
I fear the dread Events that dog them both,
Leſt ſome ill-greeting Touch attempt the Perſon
Of our unowned Siſter.

E. Brother. I do not, Brother,
Infer, as if I thought my Siſter's State
Secure, without all Doubt or Controverſy:
Yet where an equal Poiſe of Hope and Fear
Does arbitrate th' Event, my Nature is
That I incline to Hope rather than Fear,
And gladly baniſh ſquint Suſpicion.
My Siſter is not ſo defenceleſs left
As you imagine; ſhe has a hidden Strength,
Which you remember not.

Y. Brother. What hidden Strength,
Unleſs the Strength of Heav'n, if you mean that?

E. Brother. I mean that too; but yet a hidden Strength,
Which, if Heav'n gave it, may be term'd her own:
'Tis Chaſtity, my Brother, Chaſtity.
She that has that, is clad in compleat Steel,

And, like a quiver'd Nymph with Arrows keen,
May trace huge Foreſts, and unharbour'd Heaths,
Infamous Hills, and ſandy perillous Wilds;
Where, through the ſacred Rays of Chaſtity,
No Savage fierce, Bandit, or Mountaineer
Will dare to ſoil her Virgin Purity:
Yea there, where very Deſolation dwells
By Grots, and Caverns ſhagg'd with horrid Shades,
She may paſs on with unblench'd Majeſty,
Be it not done in Pride, or in Preſumption.
Y. Brother. How gladly would I have my Terrors hush'd
By crediting the Wonders you relate!
E. Brother. Some ſay no evil Thing that walks by Night,
In Fog, or Fire, by Lake, or Mooriſh Fen,
Blue meagre Hag, or ſtubborn unlaid Ghoſt,
That breaks his magick Chains at *Curfew* Time,
No Goblin, or ſwart Fairy of the Mine,
Hath hurtful Power o'er true Virginity.
Do ye believe me yet, or ſhall I call
Antiquity from the old Schools of *Greece*,
To teſtify the Arms of Chaſtity?
Hence had the Huntreſs *Dian* her dread Bow,
Fair ſilver-ſhafted Queen, for ever chaſte,
Wherewith ſhe tam'd the brinded Lioneſs,
And ſpotted Mountain-Pard, but ſet at nought
The frivolous Bolt of *Cupid*; Gods and Men
Fear'd her ſtern Frown, and ſhe was Queen o'th' Woods.
What was the Snaky-headed *Gorgon* Shield,
That wiſe *Minerva* wore, unconquer'd Virgin,
Wherewith ſhe freez'd her Foes to congeal'd Stone,
But rigid Looks of chaſte Auſterity,
And noble Grace, that daſh'd brute Violence
With ſudden Adoration, and blank Awe?

E. Brother.

Y. Brother. But what are Virtue's awful Charms to
those,
Who cannot reverence what they never knew?
E. Brother. So dear to Heav'n is saintly Chastity,
That when a Soul is found sincerely so,
A Thousand livery'd Angels lacquey her,
Driving far off each Thing of Sin and Guilt,
And in clear Dream and solemn Vision,
Tell her of Things, that no gross Ear can hear;
Till oft Converse with Heav'nly Habitants
Begin to cast a Beam on th' outward Shape,
The unpolluted Temple of the Mind,
And turn it by Degrees to the Soul's Essence,
Till all be made Immortal.
Y. Brother. Happy State,
Beyond Belief of Vice!
E. Brother. But when vile Lust,
By unchaste Looks, loose Gestures, and foul Talk,
But most by lewd and lavish Act of Sin,
Lets in Defilement to the Spiritual Part,
The Soul grows clotted by Contagion,
Imbodies, and imbrutes, till she quite lose
The Divine Property of her first Being.
Such are those thick and gloomy Shadows damp,
Oft seen in Charnel-Vaults, and Sepulchres;
Lingring, and sitting by a new-made Grave,
As loth to leave the Body, that it lov'd,
And link'd itself in Carnal Sensuality
To a degenerate and degraded State.
Y. Brother. How charming is Divine Philosophy!
Not harsh and crabbed, as dull Fools suppose,
But musical as is *Apollo*'s Lute,
And a perpetual Feast of nectar'd Sweets,
Where no crude Surfeit reigns.
E. Brother. List, list; I hear
Some far off Hallow break the silent Air.
Y. Brother. Methought so too; what should it be?

E. Brother.

E. Brother. For certain
Either ſome one like us Night-founder'd here,
Or elſe ſome Neighbour Woodman, or at worſt,
Some roving Robber calling to his Fellows.
Y. Brother. Heaven keep my Siſter. Again! again! and near!
Beſt draw, and ſtand upon our Guard.
E. Brother. I'll hallow;
If he be friendly, he comes well; if not,
Defence is a good Cauſe, and Heav'n be for us.

Enter the firſt attendant Spirit, habited like a Shepherd.

Y. Brother. That Hallow I ſhould know; what are you? Speak.
Come not too near, you fall on Iron Stakes elſe.
E. Brother. What Voice is that? My young Lord? Speak again.
Y. Brother. O Brother, 'tis my Father's Shepherd ſure.
E. Brother. *Thyrſis?* Whoſe artful Strains have oft delay'd
The huddling Brook to hear his Madrigal,
And ſweeten'd every Muſk-Roſe of the Dale?
How cam'ſt thou here, good Swain? Has any Ram
Slipp'd from the Fold, or young Kid loſt his Dam,
Or ſtraggling Weather the pent Flock forſook?
How could'ſt thou find this dark ſequeſter'd Nook?
Spirit. O my lov'd Maſter's Heir, and his next Joy,
I came not here on ſuch a trivial Toy
As a ſtray'd Ewe, or to purſue the Stealth
Of pilfering Wolf; not all the fleecy Wealth,
That doth enrich theſe Downs, is worth a Thought
To this my Errand, and the Care it brought.
But O my Virgin Lady, where is ſhe?
How chance ſhe is not in your Company?

E. Brother.

E. Brother. To tell thee ſadly, Shepherd, without Blame,
Or our Neglect, we loſt her as we came.

1ſt Sp. Ah me unhappy! then my Fears are true.

E. Brother. What Fears, good *Thyrſis*; prithee briefly ſhew.

1ſt Sp. I'll tell ye; 'tis not vain, nor fabulous,
(Tho' ſo eſteem'd by ſhallow Ignorance)
What the ſage Poets, taught by th'heavn'ly Muſe,
Story'd of old in high Immortal Verſe,
Of dire Chimeras, and enchanted Iſles,
And rifted Rocks, whoſe Entrance leads to Hell;
For ſuch there be; but unbelief is blind.

E. Brother. Proceed, good Shepherd; I am all Attention.

1ſt Sp. Within the Navel of this hideous Wood,
Immur'd in Cypreſs Shades a Sorcerer dwells,
Of *Bacchus* and of *Circe* born, great *Comus*,
Deep skill'd in all his Mother's Witcheries.
And here to ev'ry thirſty Wanderer
By ſly Enticements gives his baneful Cup,
With many Murmurs mix'd, whoſe pleaſing Poiſon
The Viſage quite transforms of him that drinks,
And the inglorious Likeneſs of a Beaſt
Fixes inſtead, unmoulding Reaſon's Mintage,
Character'd in the Face. This have I learnt
Tending my Flocks hard by i'th'hilly Crofts,
That brow this bottom Glade, whence Night by Night
He and his monſt'rous Rout are heard to howl,
Like ſtabled Wolves or Tygers at their Prey,
Doing abhorred Rites to *Hecate*,
In their obſcured Haunts and inmoſt Bowers;
Yet have they many Baits and guileful Spells,
And Beauty's tempting Semblance can put on,
To inveigle and invite th' unwary Sence
Of them that paſs unweeting by the Way.
But hark! The beaten Timbrel's jarring Sound

And

And wild tumultuous Mirth proclaim their Preſence.
Onward they move; and ſee! a blazing Torch
Gleams thro' the Shade, and this way guides their Steps.
Let us withdraw a while, and watch their Motions.

[*They retire.*

Enter Comus's *Crew, reveling and by turns careſſing each other, till they obſerve the two Brothers; then the Elder Brother advances and ſpeaks.*

E. Brother. Who are you? Speak! That thus in wanton Riot
And midnight Revelry, like drunken *Bacchanals*,
Invade the Silence of theſe lonely Shades?

1ſt. *Wom.* Ye Godlike Youths, whoſe radiant Forms excell
The blooming Grace of *Maia*'s winged Son,
Bleſs the propitious Star, that led you to us;
We are the Happieſt of the Race of Men;
Of Freedom, Mirth, and Joy the only Heirs:
But you ſhall ſhare them with us; for this Cup,
This nectar'd Cup, the ſweet Aſſurance gives
Of preſent and the Pledge of future Bliſs.

She offers 'em the Cup, which they both put by.

E. Brother. Forbear, nor offer us the poiſon'd Sweets,
That thus have render'd thee thy Sex's Shame,
All Sence of Honour baniſh'd from thy Breaſt.

SONG,

SONG.

I.

FAME's an Eccho, prattling double,
An empty, airy, glittering Bubble,
A Breath can ſwell, a Breath can ſink it,
The Wiſe not worth their keeping think it.

II.

Why then, why ſuch Toil and Pain
Fame's uncertain Smiles to gain?
Like her Siſter, Fortune, blind,
To the beſt ſhe's oft unkind,
And the worſt her Favour find.

E. Brother. By her own Sentence Virtue ſtands abſolv'd,
Nor asks an Eccho from the Tongues of Men
To tell what hourly to herſelf ſhe proves.
Who wants his own, no other Praiſe enjoys;
His Ear receives it as a fulſome Tale,
To which his Heart in ſecret gives the Lye.
Nay, ſlander'd Innocence muſt feel a Peace,
An inward Peace, which flatter'd Guilt ne'er knew.
Y. Brother. How low ſinks Beauty, when by Vice debas'd?
How fair that Form, if Virtue dwelt within?
But from this ſhameleſs Advocate of Shame
The warbled Song harſh jarring Diſcord grates.

1ſt Woman. Oh! how unſeemly ſhews in blooming Youth
Such grey Severity! —— But come with us,
We to the Bower of Bliſs will guide your Steps;
There you ſhall taſte the Joys that Nature ſheds
On the gay Spring of Life, Youth's flow'ry Prime:
From Morn to Noon, from Noon to dewy Eve,
Each riſing Hour by riſing Pleaſures mark'd.

SONG. *By a Woman in a Paſtoral Habit.*

I.

WOULD you taſte the noontide Air?
To yon fragrant Bower repair,
Where woven with the poplar Bough
The mantling Vine will ſhelter you.

II.

Down each ſide a Fountain flows,
Tinkling, murmuring, as it goes
Lightly o'er the moſſy Ground,
Sultry Phœbus *ſcorching round.*

III.

Round, the languid Herds and Sheep
Stretch'd o'er ſunny Hillocks ſleep,
While on the Hyacinth and Roſe
The Fair does all alone repoſe.

IV. *All*

IV.

All alone —— and in her Arms
Your Breaſt may beat to Love's Alarms,
Till bleſs'd and bleſſing you ſhall own,
The Joys of Love *are Joys alone.*

Y. Brother. Short is the Courſe of every lawleſs Pleaſure;
Grief, like a Shade, on all it's Footſteps waits,
Scarce viſible in Joy's meridian Height,
But downward as it's Blaze declining ſpeeds,
The dwarfiſh Shadow to a Giant ſpreads.
Of virtuous Pleaſure the Reverſe is true.

1ſt Woman. No more, theſe formal Maxims miſbecome you,
They only ſuit ſuſpicious ſhrivell'd Age.

SONG. *By One Man and two Women.*

LIVE, and love, enjoy the Fair,
Baniſh Sorrow, baniſh Care,
Mind not what old Dotards ſay,
Age has had his ſhare of Play,
But Youth's Sport begins to Day.

From the Fruits of ſweet Delight
Let not ſcare-crow Virtue fright.
Here in Pleaſure's Vineyard we
Rove, like Birds, from Tree to Tree,
Careleſs, airy, gay, and free.

E. Brother. How can your impious Tongues profane the Name
Of ſacred Virtue, and yet promiſe Pleaſure
In lying Songs of Vanity and Vice?
From Virtue ſever'd, Pleaſure Phrenzy grows,
The gay Delirium of the feveriſh Mind,
And always flies at Reaſon's cool Return.

1ſt *Wom.* Perhaps it may; perhaps the ſweeteſt Joys
Of Love itſelf from Paſſion's Folly ſpring,
But ſay, does Wiſdom greater Bliſs beſtow?

E. Bro. Alike from Love's and Pleaſure's Path you ſtray,
In ſenſual Folly blindly ſeeking both,
Your Pleaſure Riot, Luſt your boaſted Love;
Capricious, wanton, bold, and brutal Luſt
Is meanly ſelfiſh, when reſiſted, cruel,
And, like the Blaſt of peſtilential Winds,
Taints the ſweet Bloom of Nature's faireſt Forms.
But Love, like od'rous *Zephyr*'s grateful Breath,
Repays the Flower that Sweetneſs which it borrows,
Uninjuring, uninjur'd Lovers move
In their own Sphere of Happineſs content,
By mutual Truth avoiding mutual Blame.
But we forget: Who hears the Voice of Truth,
In noiſy Riot and Intemperance drown'd?

1ſt *Wom.* Come, come, my Friends, and Part'ners of my Joys,
Leave to theſe pedant Youths their bookiſh Dreams,
Poor blinded Boys by their blind Guides miſled!
A beardleſs *Cynick* is the Shame of Nature,
Beyond the Cure of this inſpiring Cup;
And my Contempt, at beſt, my Pity moves.
Away, nor waſte a Moment more about 'em.

CHO-

CHORUS.

Away, away, away,
To Comus' *Court repair,*
There Night outſhines the Day,
There yields the melting Fair.

[*Exeunt, Singing.*

E. Brother. She's gone! may Scorn purſue her wanton Arts,
And all the painted Charms, that Vice can wear.
Yet oft o'er credulous Youth ſuch *Syrens* triumph,
And lead their captive Sence in Chains as ſtrong
As Links of Adamant. Let us be free
And, to ſecure our Freedom, virtuous.
Y. Brother. But ſhould our helpleſs Sifter meet the Rage
Of this inſulting Troop, what could ſhe do?
What Hope, what Comfort, what Support were left?
Spir. She meets not them: but yet, if right I gueſs,
A harder Trial on her Virtue waits.
E. Brother. Protect her, Heav'n! but whence this ſad Conjecture?
Spir. This Evening late, by then the chewing Flocks
Had ta'en their Supper on the ſavoury Herb
Of Knot-Graſs Dew-beſprent, and were in Fold,
I ſat me down to watch upon a Bank
With Ivy canopy'd, and interwove
With flaunting Honeyſuckle, and began,
Wrapp'd in a pleaſing Fit of Melancholy,
To meditate my Rural Minſtrelſy,

Till

Till Fancy had her Fill; but e're a Cloſe
The wonted Roar was up amidſt the Woods,
And fill'd the Air with barbarous Diſſonance,
At which I ceas'd, and liſten'd them a-while.

Y. Brother. What follow'd then? O! If our helpleſs Siſter ——

Spirit. Streight an unuſual Stop of ſudden Silence
Gave reſpite to the drowſy frighted Steeds,
That draw the Litter of cloſe-curtain'd Sleep.
At laſt a ſoft and ſolemn breathing Sound
Roſe like a Steam of rich diſtill'd Purfumes,
And ſtole upon the Air, that ev'n Silence
Was took e're ſhe was 'ware, and wiſh'd ſhe might
Deny her Nature, and be never more
Still to be ſo diſplac'd. I was all Ear,
And took in Strains, that might create a Soul
Under the Ribs of Death — but O! e're long,
Too well I did perceive it was the Voice
Of my moſt honour'd Lady, your dear Siſter.

Y. Brother. O my foreboding Heart! Too true my Fears. —

Spirit. Amaz'd I ſtood, harrow'd with Grief and Fear,
And O! poor hapleſs Nightingale, thought I,
How ſweet thou ſing'ſt, how near the deadly Snare!
Then down the Lawns I ran with headlong Haſte,
Thro' Paths, and Turnings often trod by Day,
Till guided by my Ear, I found the Place,
Where the damn'd Wiſard, hid in ſly Diſguiſe
(For ſo by certain Signs I knew) had met
Already, e're my beſt Speed cou'd prevent,
The aidleſs innocent Lady his wiſh'd Prey;
Who gently ask'd, if he had ſeen ſuch two,
Suppoſing him ſome neighbour Villager.
Longer I durſt not ſtay; but ſoon I gueſs'd
Ye were the two ſhe meant; with that I ſprung
Into ſwift Flight, till I had found you here.
But farther know I not.

Y. Brother.

Y. Brother. —— O Night and Shades!
How are ye join'd with Hell in triple Knot
Againſt the unarmed Weakneſs of one Virgin
Alone, and helpleſs? Is this the Confidence
You gave me, Brother?
E. Brother. Yes; and keep it ſtill,
Lean on it ſafely; not a Period
Shall be unſaid for me: Againſt the Threats
Of Malice, or of Sorcery, or that Power,
Which erring Men call Chance, this I hold firm,
Virtue may be aſſail'd, but never hurt,
Surpriz'd by unjuſt Force, but not enthrall'd;
Yea ev'n that, which Miſchief meant moſt Harm,
Shall in the happy Trial prove moſt Glory.
But Evil on itſelf ſhall back recoil,
And mix no more with Goodneſs, when at laſt
Gather'd like Scum, and ſettled to itſelf,
It ſhall be in Eternal reſtleſs Change
Self-fed, and ſelf-conſum'd. If this fail,
The pillar'd Firmament is Rotteneſs,
And Earth's Baſe built on Stubble. But come, let's on;
Againſt th' oppoſing Will and Arm of Heav'n
May never this juſt Sword be lifted up;
But for that damn'd Magician, let him be girt
With all the grieſly Legions that troop
Under the ſooty Flag of *Acheron*,
Harpyes and *Hydras*, or all the monſtrous Forms
Twixt *Africa* and *Inde*, I'll find him out,
And force him to reſtore his Purchaſe black,
Or drag him by the Curls to a foul Death,
Curs'd as his Life.
Spirit. Alas! Good vent'rous Youth,
I love thy Courage yet, and bold Empriſe;
But here thy Sword can do thee little Stead,
Far other Arms, and other Weapons muſt
Be thoſe, that quell the Might of helliſh Charms.
He with his bare Wand can unthread thy Joints,
And crumble all thy Sinews. *E. Brother.*

E. Brother. Why prithee, Shepherd,
How durſt thou then thyſelf approach ſo near
As to make this Relation? *Spirit.*

Spirit. A Shepherd Lad,
Of ſmall Regard to ſee to, yet well skill'd
In ev'ry virtuous Plant, and healing Herb,
That ſpreads her verdant Leaf to th' morning Ray;
Has ſhewn me Simples of a thouſand Names,
Telling their ſtrange and vigorous Faculties.
Amongſt the reſt a ſmall unſightly Root,
But of divine Effect, he cull'd me out;
And bade me keep it as of ſovereign Uſe
'Gainſt all Enchantment, Mildew, Blaſt, or Damp,
Or ghaſtly Fury's Apparition.
I purs'd it up. If you have this about you
(As I will give you when you go) you may
Boldly aſſault the Necromancer's Hall;
Where if he be, with dauntleſs Hardyhood,
And brandiſh'd Blade ruſh on him, break his Glaſs,
And ſhed the luſcious Liquor on the Ground;
But ſeize his Wand, tho' he, and his curs'd Crew
Fierce Sign of Battle make, and menace high,
Or like the Sons of *Vulcan* vomit Smoak,
Yet will they ſoon retire if he but ſhrink.

E. Brother. Thyrſis, lead on a-pace, I'll follow thee,
And ſome good Angel bear a Shield before us.

End of the Second *Act.*

ACT

ACT III.

SCENE *opens and discovers a magnificent Hall in* Comus's *Palace, set off with all the gay Decorations proper for an ancient Banqueting Room.* Comus *and Attendants stand on each Side of the Lady, who is seated in an enchanted Chair; and by her Looks and Gestures expresses great Signs of Uneasiness and Melancholy.*

Comus Speaks.

HENCE, loathed Melancholy,
Of *Cerberus*, and blackest Midnight born,
In *Stygian* Cave forlorn,
'Mongst horrid Shapes, and Shrieks, and Sights unholy,
Find out some uncouth Cell,
Where brooding Darkness spreads his jealous Wings,
And the Night-Raven sings;
There, under Ebon-Shades, and low brow'd Rocks,
As ragged as thy Locks,
In dark *Cimmerian* Desart ever dwell.
But come, thou Goddess fair and free,
In Heav'n ycleap'd *Euphrosyne*;

And by Men, heart-easing Mirth,
Whom lovely *Venus* at a Birth
With two Sister Graces more,
To Ivy-crowned *Bacchus* bore.
Haste thee, Nymph, and bring with thee
Jest and youthful Jollity,
Quips and Cranks, and wanton Wiles,
Nods, and Becks, and wreathed Smiles,
Such as hang on *Hebe*'s Cheek,
And love to live in dimple sleek,
Sport, that wrinkled Care derides,
And Laughter holding both his Sides.
Come, and trip it as you go
On the light fantastick Toe.

While these Lines are repeating enter a Nymph, representing Euphrosyne, *or Mirth; who advances to the Lady, and sings the following Song.*

SONG.

I.

COME, come, bid Adieu to Fear,
Love and Harmony live here.
No domeſtick jealous Jars,
Buzzing Slanders, wordy Wars,
In my Preſence will appear.
Love and Harmony reign here.

II.

Sighs to amorous Sighs returning,
Pulſes beating, Boſoms burning,
Boſoms with warm Wiſhes panting,
Words to ſpeak thoſe Wiſhes wanting,
Are the only Tumults here,
All the Woes you need to fear,
Love and Harmony reign here.

Lady. How long muſt I, by magick Fetters chain'd
To this deteſted Seat, hear odious Strains
Of ſhameleſs Folly, which my Soul abhors.
Com. Ye Sedge-crown'd *Naiades* by Twilight ſeen,
Along *Meander*'s mazy Border green,
At *Comus*' Call appear in all your azure Sheen.

He waves his Wand, the Naiades *enter and range themſelves in order to dance.*

Now ſoftly ſlow let *Lydian* Meaſures move,
And breathe the pleaſing Pangs of gentle Love.
In ſwimming Dance on Air's ſoft Billows float,
Soft ſwell your Boſoms with the ſwelling Note;
With pliant Arm in graceful Motion vie,
Now ſunk with Eaſe, with Eaſe now lifted high;
Till lively Geſture each fond Care reveal,
That Muſick can expreſs, or Paſſion feel.

The Naiads *dance a ſlow Dance agreeable to the Subject of the preceding Lines, and expreſſive of the Paſſion of Love.*

After this Dance the Paſtoral Nymph advances ſlow, with a melancholy and deſponding Air, to the ſide of the Stage, and repeats by way of Soliloquy the firſt ſix Lines, and then ſings the Ballad. In the mean Time ſhe is obſerv'd by Euphroſyne, *who by her Geſture expreſſes to the Audience her different Sentiments of the Subject of her Complaint, ſuitably to the Character of their ſeveral Songs.*

RECITATIVO.

How gentle was my Damon's *Air!*
Like ſunny Beams his golden Hair,
His Voice was like the Nightingale's
More ſweet his Breath than flow'ry Vales.
How hard ſuch Beauties to reſign!
And yet that cruel Task is mine!

A BAL-

A BALLAD.

I.

ON every Hill, in every Grove,
Along the Margin of each Stream,
Dear conſcious Scenes of former Love,
I mourn, and Damon *is my Theme.*
The Hills, the Groves, the Streams remain,
But Damon *there I ſeek in vain.*

II.

Now to the moſſy Cave I fly,
Where to my Swain I oft have ſung,
Well pleas'd the browſing Goats to ſpy,
As o'er the airy Steep they hung.
The moſſy Cave, the Goats remain,
But Damon *there I ſeek in vain.*

III.

Now thro' the rambling Vale I paſs,
And ſigh to ſee the well-known Shade,
I weep, and kiſs the bended Graſs,
Where Love *and* Damon *fondly play'd.*
The Vale, the Shade, the Graſs remain,
But Damon *there I ſeek in vain.*

IV. *From*

IV.

From Hill, from Dale, each Charm is fled,
Groves, Flocks, and Fountains pleaſe no more,
Each Flower in Pity droops it's Head,
All Nature does my Loſs deplore.
All, all reproach the faithleſs Swain,
Yet Damon *ſtill I ſeek in vain.*

RECITATIVO. *By* Euphroſyne.

Love, the greateſt Bliſs below,
How to taſte few Women know,
Fewer ſtill the Way have hit
How a fickle Swain to quit.
Simple Nymph, thou learn of me,
How to treat Inconſtancy.

BALLAD.

I.

THE wanton God, that pierces Hearts,
Dips in Gall his pointed Darts,
But the Nymph diſdains to pine,
Who bathes the Wound with roſy Wine.

II. *Fare-*

II.

Farewel Lovers, when they're cloy'd;
If I am ſcorn'd, becauſe enjoy'd,
Sure the ſqueamiſh Fops are free
To rid me of dull Company.

III.

They have Charms, whilſt mine can pleaſe,
I love them much, but more my Eaſe;
Nor jealous Fears my Love moleſt,
Nor faithleſs Vows ſhall break my Reſt.

IV.

Why ſhou'd they e'er give me Pain,
Who to give me Joy diſdain?
All I hope of mortal Man,
Is to love me —— whilſt he can.

Comus Speaks.

Caſt thine Eyes around, and ſee,
How from every Element
Nature's Sweets are cull'd for thee,
And her choiceſt Bleſſings ſent.

Fire, Water, Earth, and Air combine
To compoſe the rich Repaſt,
Their Aid the diſtant Seaſons join,
To court thy Smell, thy Sight, thy Taſte.
Hither Summer, Autumn, Spring,
Hither all your Tributes bring.

After

After this they put on their Chaplets, and prepare for the Feaſt; while Comus *is advancing with his Cup, and one of his Attendants offers a Chaplet to the Lady, which ſhe throws on the Ground with Indignation, the Preparation for the Feaſt is interrupted by lofty and ſolemn Muſick from above, whence the ſecond Attendant Spirit deſcends gradually in a ſplendid Machine, repeating the following Lines.*

Second Spirit Speaks.

From the Realms of Peace above,
From the Source of heav'nly Love,
From the ſtarry Throne of *Jove*,
Where tuneful Muſes in a glittering Ring
To the celeſtial Lyre's eternal String,
Patient Virtue's Triumph ſing,
To theſe dim Labyrinths where Mortals ſtray,
Maz'd in Paſſion's pathleſs Way
To ſave thy purer Breaſt from Spot and Blame,
Thy Guardian Spirit came.

He advances to the Lady, and ſings, remaining ſtill inviſible to Comus *and his Crew, but heard by them with ſome Concern, which they endeavour to diſſemble.*

SONG.

SONG.

I.

NOR on Beds of fading Flowers,
Shedding ſoon their gaudy Pride,
Nor with Swains in Syren *Bowers,*
Will true Pleaſure long reſide.

II.

On awful Virtue's Hill ſublime,
Enthroned ſits th' Immortal Fair;
Who wins her Height, muſt patient climb,
The Steps are Peril, Toil, and Care.

So from the Firſt did Jove *ordain,*
Eternal Bliſs for tranſient Pain.

The Spirit reaſcends, the Muſick playing loud and ſolemn.

Lady. Thanks, heav'nly Songſter! Whoſoe'er thou art,
Who deign'ſt to enter theſe unhallow'd Walls,
To bring the Song of Virtue to mine Ear!
O ceaſe not, ceaſe not the melodious Strain,
Till my rapt Soul high on the ſwelling Note
To Heav'n aſcend——far from theſe horrid Fiends!
Com. Mere airy Dreams of Air-bred People theſe!
Who look with Envy on more happy Man,
And wou'd decry the Joys they cannot taſte.

Quit not the Subſtance for a ſtalking Shade
Of hollow Virtue, which eludes the Graſp.
Drink this, and you will ſcorn ſuch idle Tales.

[*He offers the Cup, which ſhe puts by, and offers to riſe.*

Nay, Lady, ſit; if I but wave this Wand,
Your Nerves are all bound up in Alabaſter,
And you a Statue, or, as *Daphne* was,
Root-bound, that fled *Apollo*.

Lad. Fool, do not boaſt;
Thou can'ſt not touch the Freedom of my Mind
With all thy Charms, altho' this corp'ral Rind
Thou haſt immanacl'd, while Heav'n ſees good.

Com. Why are you vex'd, Lady? Why do you frown?
Here dwell no Frowns nor Anger; from theſe Gates
Sorrow flies far. See, here be all the Pleaſures
That Fancy can beget on youthful Thoughts,
When the freſh Blood grows lively, and returns
Briſk as the *April* Buds in Primroſe Seaſon.
And firſt behold this cordial Julap here,
That flames and dances in his Cryſtal Bounds,
With Spirits of Balm and fragrant Syrups mix'd.
Not that *Nepenthes*, which the Wife of *Thone*
In *Ægypt* gave to *Jove*-born *Helena*,
Is of ſuch Pow'r to ſtir up Joy, as this,
To Life ſo friendly, or ſo cool to Thirſt.

Lady. Know, baſe Deluder, that I will not taſte it.
Keep thy deteſted Gifts for ſuch as theſe.

[*Points to his Crew.*

Com. Why ſhou'd you be ſo cruel to yourſelf,
And to thoſe dainty Limbs, which Nature lent
For gentle Uſage and ſoft Delicacy?
But you invert the Cov'nants of her Truſt,
And harſhly deal, like an ill Borrower,

With

With that which you receiv'd on other Terms,
Scorning the unexempt Condition,
By which all human Frailty muſt ſubſiſt,
Refreſhment after Toil, Eaſe after Pain;
That have been tir'd all Day without Repaſt,
And timely Reſt have wanted. But, fair Virgin,
This will reſtore all ſoon.

Lady. 'Twill not, falſe Traitor!
'Twill not reſtore the Truth and Honeſty,
That thou haſt baniſh'd from thy Tongue with Lies.
Was this the Cottage, and the ſafe Abode
Thou told'ſt me of? Hence with thy brew'd Enchantments.
Haſt thou betray'd my credulous Innocence
Wiſh vizor'd Falſehood and baſe Forgery?
And would'ſt thou ſeek again to trap me here
With lick'riſh Baits, fit to enſnare a Brute?
Were it a Draught for *Juno* when ſhe banquets,
I wou'd not taſte thy treas'nous Offer----- None
But ſuch as are good Men can give good things;
And that, which is not good, is not delicious
To a well-govern'd and wiſe Appetite.

Com. O, Fooliſhneſs of Men! that lend their Ear
To thoſe budge Doctors of the *Stoick* Fur,
And fetch their Precepts from the *Cynick* Tub,
Praiſing the lean and ſallow Abſtinence.
Wherefore did Nature pour her Bounties forth
With ſuch a full and unwithdrawing Hand,
Cov'ring the Earth with Odours, Fruits, and Flocks,
Thronging the Seas with Spawn innumerable,
But all to pleaſe and ſate the curious Taſte?
And ſet to work Millions of ſpinning Worms,
That in their green Shops weave the ſmooth-hair'd Silk,
To deck her Sons; and, that no Corner might
Be vacant of her Plenty, in her own Loins
She hutch'd th'all-worſhip'd Ore, and precious Gems
To ſtore her Children with. If all the World

Should in a Pet of Temp'rance feed on Pulſe,
Drink the clear Stream, and nothing wear but Frize,
Th'All-giver wou'd be unthank'd, wou'd be unprais'd,
Not half his Riches known, and yet deſpis'd,
And we ſhould ſerve him as a grudging Maſter,
As a penurious Niggard of his Wealth,
And live like Nature's Baſtards, not her Sons;
Who wou'd be quite ſurcharg'd with her own Weight,
And ſtrangled with her waſte Fertility.

Lady. I had not thought to have unlock'd my Lips
In this unhallow'd Air, but that this Juggler
Wou'd think to charm my Judgment, as mine Eyes,
Obtruding falſe Rules, pranck'd in Reaſon's Garb.
I hate when Vice can bolt her Arguments,
And Virtue has no Tongue to check her Pride.
Impoſtor, do not charge moſt innocent Nature,
As if ſhe would her Children ſhou'd be riotous
With her Abundance. She, good Catereſs,
Means her Proviſion only to the good,
That live according to her ſober Laws,
And holy Dictate of ſpare Temperance.
If ev'ry juſt Man, that now pines with Want,
Had but a mod'rate and beſeeming Share
Of that which lewdly-pamper'd Luxury
Now heaps upon ſome few with vaſt Exceſs,
Nature's full Bleſſings wou'd be well diſpens'd
In unſuperfluous even Proportion;
And ſhe no whiten cumber'd with her Store.
And then the Giver wou'd be better thank'd,
His Praiſe due paid: For ſwiniſh Gluttony
Ne'er looks to Heav'n amidſt his gorgeous Feaſt,
But with beſotted baſe Ingratitude
Crams, and blaſphemes his Feeder. Shall I go on?
Or have I ſaid enough?

Com. Enough to ſhew
That you are cheated by the lying Boaſts
Of ſtarving Pedants, that affect a Fame
From ſcorning Pleaſures which they cannot reach

Euphroſyne

Euphroſyne *ſings.*

I.

PREACH not me your muſty Rules,
Ye Drones, that mould in idle Cell;
The Heart is wiſer than the Schools,
The Senſes always reaſon well.

II.

If ſhort my Span, I leſs can ſpare
To paſs a ſingle Pleaſure by;
An Hour is long, if loſt in Care,
They only live, who Life enjoy.

Com. Theſe are the Maxims of the truly Wiſe,
Of ſuch as practiſe what they preach to others.
Here are no Hypocrites, no grave Diſſemblers;
Nor pining Grief, nor eating Cares approach us,
Nor Sighs, nor Murmurs——but of gentle *Love*,
Whoſe *Woes* delight. What muſt his *Pleaſures* then?

Euphroſyne *ſings.*

YE Fauns. *and ye* Dryads, *from Hill, Dale, and Grove,*
Trip, trip it along, conducted by Love;
Swiftly reſort to Comus' *gay Court,*
And in various Meaſures ſhew Love's *various Sport.*

Enter

Enter the Fauns *and* Dryads *and attend to the following Directions. The Tune is play'd a ſecond time, to which they dance.*

NOW lighter and gayer, ye tinkling Strings, ſound;
Light, light in the Air, ye nimble Nymphs, bound.
Now, now with quick Feet the Ground beat, beat, beat,
Now, now with quick Feet the Ground beat, beat, beat,
&c.

Now cold and denying,
Now kind and complying,
Diſdaining, complaining,
Conſenting, repenting,
Indifference now feigning.
Again with quick Feet the Ground beat, beat, beat.

[Exeunt *Dancers.*

Com. Liſt, Lady, be not coy, and be not cozen'd
With that ſame vaunted Name *Virginity.*
Beauty is Nature's Coin, muſt not be hoarded,
But muſt be current; and the Good thereof
Conſiſts in mutual and partaken Bliſs,
Unſavoury in th'Enjoyment of itſelf:
If you let ſlip Time, like a neglected Roſe,
It withers on the Stalk with languiſh'd Head.
Beauty is Nature's Brag, and muſt be ſhown
In Courts, at Feaſts, and high Solemnities,
Where moſt may wonder at the Workmanſhip.
It is for homely Features to keep Home,
They had their Name from thence. Coarſe Complexions,
And Cheeks of ſorry Grain, will ſerve to ply
The Sampler, and to teaze the Houſewife's Wool.

What

What need a Vermil-tinctur'd Lip for that,
Love-darting Eyes, or Treſſes like the Morn?
There was another Meaning in theſe Gifts;
Think what, and be adviſ'd; you are but young yet,
This will inform you ſoon.
Lady. To him that dares
Arm his prophane Tongue with contemptuous Words,
Againſt the Sun-clad Power of Chaſtity,
Fain wou'd I ſomething ſay, yet to what purpoſe?
Thou haſt nor Ear, nor Soul to apprehend;
And thou art worthy that thou ſhould'ſt not know
More Happineſs than this thy preſent Lot;
Enjoy your dear Wit, and gay Rhetorick,
That has ſo well been taught her dazling Fence.
Thou art not fit to hear thyſelf convinc'd;
Yet ſhou'd I try, the uncontrouled Worth
Of this pure Cauſe wou'd kindle my rapt Spirits,
To ſuch a Flame of ſacred Vehemence,
That dumb Things wou'd be mov'd to ſympathize,
And the brute Earth wou'd lend her Nerves and ſhake,
Till all thy magick Structures, rear'd ſo high,
Were ſhatter'd into Heaps o'er thy falſe Head.
Com. She fables not, I feel that I do fear
Her Words ſet off by ſome ſuperior Power;
And tho' not mortal, yet a cold ſhudd'ring Dew
Dips me all o'er, as when the Wrath of *Jove*
Speaks Thunder and the Chains of *Erebus*
To ſome of *Saturn*'s Crew. I muſt diſſemble,
And try her yet more ſtrongly-- Come, no more,
This is meer moral Babble, and direct
Againſt the Canon Laws of our Foundation;
I muſt not ſuffer this, yet 'tis but the Lees
And Settlings of a melancholy Blood;
But this will cure all ſtreight, one Sip of this
Will bathe the drooping Spirits in Delight,
Beyond the Bliſs of Dreams. Be wiſe and taſte.

The

The Brothers ruſh in with Swords drawn, wreſt the Glaſs out of his Hand, and break it againſt the Ground; his Rout make ſign of Reſiſtance, but are all driven off.

Enter 1ſt Spirit.

What, have you let the falſe Enchanter ſcape?
O! ye miſtook, you ſhou'd have ſnatch'd his Wand,
And bound him faſt; without his Rod revers'd,
And backward Mutters of diſſevering Power,
We cannot free the Lady, that ſits here
In ſtony Fetters fix'd, and motionleſs.
Yet ſtay, be not diſturb'd; now I bethink me,
Some other Means I have, which may be us'd,
Which once of *Melibœus* old I learn'd,
The ſootheſt Shepherd that e'er pip'd on Plains.
I learn'd 'em then when with my fellow Swain,
The youthful *Lycidas* his Flocks I fed.
There is a gentle Nymph, not far from hence,
That with moiſt Curb ſways the ſmooth *Severn* Stream,
Sabrina is her Name, a Virgin pure:
And, as the old Swain ſaid, ſhe can unlock
The claſping Charm, and thaw the numbing Spell,
If ſhe be right invok'd in warbled Song;
For Maidenhood ſhe loves, and will be ſwift
To aid a Virgin, ſuch as was herſelf:
And ſee, the Swain himſelf in ſeaſon comes.

Enter 2d and 3d Spirit.

Haſte, *Lycidas*, and try the tuneful Strain,
Which from her Bed the fair *Sabrina* calls.

SONG.

SONG. *By the 3d. Spirit.*

SABRINA fair,
Liſten where thou art ſitting
Unaer the glaſſy, cool, tranſlucent Wave,
In twiſted Braids of Lillies knitting
The looſe Train of thy Amber-dropping Hair;
Liſten for dear Honour's ſake,
Goddeſs of the ſilver Lake,
Liſten and ſave.

Sabrina *riſes attended by Water-Nymphs.*

SONG.

Sab. *BY the ruſhy-fringed Bank,*
Where grows the Willow and the Oſier dank,
My ſliding Chariot ſtays,
Thick-ſet with Agat, and the azure Sheen
Of Turkiſh blue, and Em'rald green,
That in the Channel ſtrays,
Whilſt from off the Waters fleet
Thus I ſet my printleſs Feet,
O'er the Cowſlip's velvet Head,
That bends not as I tread,
Gentle Swain, at thy Requeſt,
I am here.

RECITATIVO.

3d Spir. *Goddeſs dear,*
We implore thy powerful Hand
To undo the charmed Band
Of true Virgin here diſtreſs'd,
Thro' the Force and thro' the Wile,
Of unbleſs'd Enchanter vile.

RECITATIVO.

Sab. *Shepherd, 'tis my Office beſt*
To help enſnared Chaſtity:
Brighteſt Lady, look on me;
Thus I ſprinkle on thy Breaſt
Drops, that from my Fountain pure
I have kept of precious Cure;
Thrice upon thy Finger's Tip,
Thrice upon thy ruby'd Lip;
Next this marble venom'd Seat,
Smear'd with Gums of glutinous Heat,
I touch with chaſte Palms moiſt and cold:
Now the Spell hath loſt his hold,
And I muſt haſte, e're Morning-Hour,
To wait in Amphitrite's *Bower.*

Sabrina *deſcends, and the Lady riſes out of her Seat; the Brothers embrace her tenderly.*

E. Brother. I oft had heard, but ne'er believ'd till now,
There are, who can by potent magick Spells
Bend to their crooked Purpoſe Nature's Laws,
Blot the fair Moon from her reſplendent Orb,
Bid whirling Planets ſtop their deſtin'd Courſe,
And thro' the yawning Earth from *Stygian* Gloom
Call up the meagre Ghoſt to Walks of Light:
It may be ſo, — for ſome myſterious End!
Yet ſtill the Freedom of the Mind, you ſee,
No Spell can reach; That righteous *Jove* forbids,
Leſt Man ſhould call his frail Divinity
The Slave of Evil, or the Sport of Chance.

Y. Brother. Why did I doubt? Why tempt the Wrath of Heaven
To ſhed juſt Vengeance on my weak Diſtruſt?
Here ſpotleſs Innocence has found Relief,
By Means as wond'rous as her ſtrange Diſtreſs.
Inform us, *Thyrſis*, if for this thine Aid
We aught can pay, that equals thy Deſert?

1ſt Spirit. Pay it to Heaven, that lent you Grace
To eſcape this curſed Place;
To Heaven, that here has try'd your Youth,
Your Faith, your Patience, and your Truth,
And ſent you thro' theſe hard Eſſays
With a Crown of Deathleſs Praiſe,
To triumph in victorious Dance
O'er ſenſual Folly and Intemperance.

Then the two firſt Spirits advance and ſpeak alternately the following Lines, which Milton *calls Epiloguizing.*

To the Ocean now I fly,
And thoſe happy Climes that lye
Where Day never ſhuts his Eye,
Up in the broad Fields of the Sky:

Their

There I ſuck the liquid Air,
All amidſt the Gardens fair
Of *Heſperus*, and his Daughters three,
That ſing about the Golden Tree.

Along the criſped Shades and Bowers
Revels the ſpruce and jocund Spring,
The Graces and the roſy-boſom'd Hours
Thither all their Bounties bring;
There eternal Summer dwells,
And Weſt-winds with musky Wing
About the Cedar'n Alleys fling
Nard and *Caſſia*'s balmy Smells.

Now my Task is ſmoothly done,
I can fly, or I can run
Quickly to the green Earth's End,
Where the bow'd Welkin ſlow doth bend;
And from thence can ſoar as ſoon
To the Corners of the Moon.

Mortals, that would follow me,
Love Virtue, ſhe alone is free:
She can teach you how to climb
Higher than the ſphery Chime;
Or, if Virtue feeble were,
Heaven itſelf would ſtoop to her.

CHORUS.

Taught by Virtue you may climb
Higher than the ſphery Chime;
Or, if Virtue feeble were,
Heaven itſelf would ſtoop to her.

FINIS.